

NEWARK CITIZENS COMMITTEE FOR
BETTER SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION
58 Barclay Street, Newark, N.J.

ADDRESS TO BOARD OF EDUCATION - SEPT. 27, 1960

Dr. Kennelly, Mr. Fuchs, and members of the Board; My name is Solomon Grauer, homeowner and taxpayer, living at 352 Seymour Avenue Newark. I am addressing you tonight in behalf of the Newark Citizens Committee For Better Schools and Education. This organization was formed almost a year ago. The reason for its formation was people's concern over the split-session classes which have developed as an organic part of our educational system in recent years. Our committee is made up of citizens, parents, and P.T.A. members as well as representatives of civic organizations including: Monmouth St. School, Madison Ave. School, Barringer, Avon, Robert Treat, Beshine, Miller, Weequahic Community Council, Bergen St., Burnett, Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council, Maple Avenue, Cleveland, and the Urban League.

Split-session classes which have spread over wide areas of our city now encompass the following schools: South Eighth St., Bergen, Peshine, Miller, Newton, Avon, Robert Treat and Madison Ave. The beginning of the 1960 school year has not only shown an increase in the number of split-session classes in these schools, but for the first time Madison Ave. School has joined the ranks of the split-session schools. What we are witnessing is the spread of this disease and no visible effort made to alleviate it. The elementary school children who are forced to attend these split-session classes are being deprived of an adequate education in their early stages of learning.

In response to the pleas and appeals by parents from these schools, in October, 1959 Mr. Fuchs and Dr. Kennelly promised that a survey

and a report would be made on the 90 split-session classes and plans would be presented to remove this blight from our school system. Yet in January, 1960 when the report was due, and the Board and Dr. Kennell were again asked what was planned, there was still no answer. At stake is the basic responsibility of any School Administration and Board of Education; namely the care and educational needs of the children of our schools.

The failure of the school authorities to anticipate this situation borders on negligence. Continued failure to create solutions to relieve the situation raises even more serious questions. Our children are our flesh and blood; they are your wards and responsibility; they are residents of tomorrow's Newark and citizens of the United States. They are being denied the basic skills which they will need to survive and contribute to society.

We the Citizens Committee For Better Schools and Education call upon you to take immediate action to end this situation. We recognize that the only final solution to this problem lies in building new schools and enlarging others. Therefore, we propose that a state of emergency be declared and that procedures for school construction be accelerated beyond their normal pace to insure their speediest completion. We further recommend that the superintendent and his staff be original and flexible in considering the use of sound structures as emergency school facilities until such time as school construction is completed. Such structures might include office buildings, brick houses and institutions which could be made to conform to state and local standards.

The parents of our organization feel that it is no longer possible to put up with this intolerable situation in our public schools.